

Message Text

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PAGE 01 LUSAKA 00555 221240Z
ACTION AID-31

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AF-10 HA-05 SSO-00 IO-13 EB-08
IGA-02 /070 W

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O R 221200Z FEB 78
FM AMEMBASSY LUSAKA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7681
INFO AMEMBASSY GABORONE IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY MBABANE

C O N F I D E N T I A L LUSAKA 0555

LONDON FOR ASST SECY MOOSE

AID FOR AFR/ESA

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: EAID SREF OTRA RH ZA
SUBJECT: AFRICARE VISIT TO ZAMBIA

REF: STATE 038653

1. EMBASSY WELCOMES VISIT OF AFRICARE TEAM AND IS IN
PROCESS OF MAKING APPROPRIATE APPOINTMENTS WITH
INDIVIDUALS AND AGENCIES INVOLVED IN REFUGEE WORK. WE
ARE ALSO ATTEMPTING TO ARRANGE A VISIT TO THE MAIN
REFUGEE CAMP LOCATED AT MAHEBA IN NORTHWESTERN ZAMBIA.
2. AS CLARK REPORT POINTED OUT, "... PRACTICALLY ALL
REFUGEES IN ZAMBIA ARE RECEIVING REASONABLE CARE AND
SUPPORT WITH VERY FEW IN DIRE STRAITS." WE WOULD ALSO
NOTE THAT THERE HAVE BEEN TWO HIGH-LEVEL VISITS IN THE
PAST SEVEN MONTHS BY USG OFFICIALS ASSESSING THE
REFUGEE SITUATION IN ZAMBIA. NEITHER VISIT HAS YET
RESULTED IN TANGIBLE ASSISTANCE EITHER FOR ZAMBIA
OR FOR THE REFUGEES. EMBASSY DOES NOT BELIEVE THAT
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SIZE OF REFUGEE PROBLEM NECESSITATES AS LENGTHY A VISIT
AS PROPOSED REFTEL. VISIT TO MAHEBA (AND POSSIBLE TO
ZAPU SCHOOLS) TOGETHER WITH LUSAKA CONTACTS, SHOULD NOT
TAKE MORE THAN A FEW DAYS. FURTHERMORE, WE BELIEVE
SHORT VISIT WOULD BE LESS LIKELY TO RAISE EXPECTATIONS
OF ASSISTANCE WHICH MIGHT BE DIFFICULT TO REALIZE,
AS HAS BEEN THE CASE IN THE PAST. DEPARTURE EVENING OF

MARCH 8 SHOULD PROVIDE TEAM SUFFICIENT TIME TO DO THEIR WORK.

3. AS DEPARTMENT IS AWARE, CURRENT EXCEPTION TO RELATIVELY REASONABLE SITUATION OF REFUGEES IS STATUS AT TWO ZAPU-SUPPORTED SCHOOLS/CAMPS FOR CHILDREN LOCATED NEAR LUSAKA, WHERE SHELTER HAS BEEN A SERIOUS PROBLEM, AND FOR WHICH ZAPU HAS MADE NUMEROUS REQUESTS FOR ASSISTANCE. ZAPU ON A NUMBER OF OCCASIONS HAS INVITED AMBASSADOR AND/OR EMBASSY PERSONNEL TO VISIT SITES. WITH DEPARTMENT CONCURRENCE, EMBASSY WILL ARRANGE TRIP TO THESE CAMPS BY AFRICARE TEAM AND EMBASSY REPRESENTATIVE.

4. SUCH A VISIT WOULD LIKELY RESULT IN PROPOSAL FOR ASSISTANCE BECAUSE BY ALL ACCOUNTS HELP IS BADLY NEEDED. EMBASSY ASSUMES THAT DEPARTMENT HAS CONSIDERED POSSIBLE US DOMESTIC COMPLICATIONS WHICH COULD ARISE REGARDING DIRECT ASSISTANCE TO ZIMBABWEAN NATIONALIST-RUN REFUGEE CAMPS BY US PVO WITH USG FUNDS, RATHER THAN CHANNELING ASSISTANCE THROUGH INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS LIKE UNHCR. IF THERE IS A QUESTION ABOUT ULTIMATE APPROVAL, WE RECOMMEND AGAINST VISIT TO ZAPU SCHOOL AT THIS TIME.

5. AS FINAL POINT, EMBASSY SUGGESTS THAT IT MAY BE INADVISABLE TO PRESENT ANY DRAFT PROPOSALS WHICH MIGHT BE DEVELOPED BY GROUP TO GRZ FOR REVIEW, AS INSTRUCTED PARA 3
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REFTEL, PRIOR TO APPROVAL OF PROPOSALS BY USG. WE BELIEVE DISCUSSION OF ANY PROJECTS WITH LOCAL AGENCIES OR AUTHORITIES SHOULD BE KEPT VERY GENERAL AND NOT REFER TO SPECIFIC PROJECT PROPOSALS.
LOW

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